

By this repulse receiv'd, and hold'st in Hell
 620 No triumph; in all her Gates *Abaddon* rues
 Thy bold attempt; hereafter learn with awe
 To dread the Son of God: he all unarm'd
 Shall chase thee with the terror of his voice
 From thy Demoniac holds, possession foul,
 Thee and thy Legions, yelling they shall fly,
 And beg to hide them in a herd of Swine,
 Lest he command them down into the deep
 Bound, and to torment sent before their time.
 Hail Son of the most High, heir of both Worlds,
 630 Queller of Satan, on thy glorious work
 Now enter, and begin to save mankind.

Thus they the Son of God our Saviour meek
 Sung Victor, and from Heavenly Feast refresh'd
 Brought on his way with joy he unobserv'd
 Home to his Mothers house private return'd.

The END.

Samson Agonistes, A DRAMATICK POEM.

The AUTHOUR
 JOHN MILTON.

Aristot. Poet. Cap. 6.

Τραγωδία μιμνήσκειται περὶ τῆς ἀνδραγαθίας, &c.

*Tragedia est imitatio actionis seriae, &c. Per misericordiam
 & metum perficiens talium affectuum lustrationem.*

LONDON,

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Of that sort of Dramatick Poem which is call'd
Tragedy.

Tragedy, as it was anciently compos'd hath been ever held the gravest, moralest, and most profitable of all other Poems: therefore said by *Aristotle* to be of power by raising pity and fear, or terrour, to purge the mind of those and such like passions, that is, to temper and reduce them to just measure with a kind of delight, stirr'd up by reading or seeing those passions well imitated. Nor is Nature wanting in her own effects to make good his assertion: for so in Physick things of melancholick hue and quality are us'd against melancholy, sower against sower, salt to remove salt humours. Hence Philosophers and other gravest Writers, as *Cicero*, *Plutarch* and others, frequently cite out of Tragick Poets, both to adorn and illustrate their discourse. The Apostle *St. Paul* himself thought it not unworthy to insert a verse of *Euripides* into the Text of Holy Scripture, *1 Cor. 15. 33.* and *Paræus* commenting on the *Revelation*, divides the whole Book as a Tragedy, into Acts distinguish'd each by a Chorus of Heavenly Harpings and Song between. Heretofore Men in highest dignity have labour'd not a little to be thought able to compose a Tragedy. Of that honour *Dionysius* the elder was no less ambitious, than before of his attaining to the Tyranny. *Augustus Cæsar* also had begun his *Ajax*, but unable to please his own judgment with what he had begun, left it unfinished. *Seneca* the Philosopher is by some thought the Authour of those Tragedies (at least the best of them) that go under that name. *Gregory Nazianzen*, a Father of the Church, thought it not unbeseeming the sanctity of his person to write a Tragedy, which is entitl'd, *Christ suffering*. This is mention'd to vindicate Tragedy from the small esteem, or rather infamy, which in the account of many it undergoes at this day with other common interludes; hap'ning through the Poets errour of intermixing Comick stuff with Tragick sadness and gravity; or introducing trivial and vulgar persons, which by all judicious hath been counted absurd; and brought in without discretion, corruptly to gratifie the people. And though ancient Tragedy use no Prologue, yet using sometimes, in case of self-defence, or explanation

Of that sort of Dramatick Poem call'd Tragedy.

nation, that which *Martial* calls an Epistle; in behalf of this Tragedy coming forth after the ancient manner, much different from what among us passes for best, thus much before-hand may be Epistl'd; that *Chorus* is here introduc'd after the Greek manner, not ancient onely but modern, and still in use among the *Italians*. In the modelling therefore of this Poem, with good reason, the Ancients and *Italians* are rather follow'd, as of much more Authority and fame. The measure of Verse us'd in the Chorus is of all sorts, call'd by the *Greeks* *Monostrophick*, or rather *Apolelymenon*, without regard had to *Strophe*, *Antistrophe* or *Epod*, which were a kind of Stanza's fram'd onely for the Musick, then us'd with the Chorus that sung; not essential to the Poem, and therefore not material; or being divided into Stanza's or Pauses, they may be call'd *Allæostrophæ*. Division into Act and Scene referring chiefly to the Stage (to which this work never was intended) is here omitted.

It suffices if the whole Drama be found not produc'd beyond the fifth Act, of the style and uniformity, and that commonly call'd the Plot, whether intricate or explicit, which is nothing indeed but such œconomy, or disposition of the fable as may stand best with verisimilitude and decorum; they onely will best judge who are not unacquainted with *Æschylus*, *Sophocles* and *Euripides*, the three Tragick Poets unequal'd yet by any, and the best rule to all who endeavour to write Tragedy. The circumscription of time wherein the whole Drama begins and ends is according to ancient rule, and best example, within the space of 24. hours.

The

The Argument.

Samson made Captive, Blind, and now in the prison at Gaza, there to labour as in a common work-house; on a Festival day, in the general cessation from labour, comes forth into the open Air, to a place nigh, somewhat retir'd, there to sit a while and bemoan his condition. Where he happens at length to be visited by certain friends and equals of his tribe, which make the Chorus, who seek to comfort him what they can; then by his old Father Manoa, who endeavours the like, and withall tells him his purpose to procure his liberty by ransom; a lastly, that this Feast was proclaim'd by the Philistins as day of Thanksgiving for their deliverance from the hands of Samson, which yet more troubles him. Manoa then departs to prosecute his indeavour with the Philistian Lords for Samson's redemption; who in the mean while is visited by other persons; and lastly by a publick Officer to require his coming to the Feast before the Lords and People, to play or shew his strength in their presence; he at first refuses, dismissing the publick Officer with absolute denial to come; at length persuaded inwardly that this was from God, he yields to go along with him, who came now the second time with great threatnings to fetch him; the Chorus yet remaining on the place, Manoa returns full of joyfull hope, to procure e'er long his Son's deliverance: in the midst of which discourse an Hebrew comes in haste confusealy at first; and afterward more distinctly relating the Catastrophe, what Samson had done to the Philistins, and by accident to himself; wherewith the Tragedy ends,

The

The Persons.

Samfon.

Manoa *the Father of Samfon.*

Dalila *his Wife.*

Harapha *of Gath.*

Publick Officer.

Meffenger.

Chorus of Danites.

The Scene before the Prifon in Gaza.

Samfon

(1)

SAMSON AGONISTES.

Samf. **A** Little onward lend thy guiding hand
To thefe dark fteps, a little farther on;
For yonder bank hath choice of Sun or fhade,
There I am wont to fit, when any chance
Relieves me from my task of fervile toil,
Daily in the common Prifon elfe enjoyn'd me,
Where I a Prifoner chain'd, fcarce freely draw
The air imprifon'd alfo, clofe and damp,
Unwholfome draught: but here I feel amends,
The breath of Heav'n frefh-blowing, pure and fweet,
With day-fpring born; here leave me to refpire.
This day a folemn Feaft the people hold
To Dagon their Sea-Idol, and forbid
Laborious works, unwillingly this reft
Their Superftition yields me; hence with leave
Retiring from the popular noife, I feek
This unfrequented place to find fome eafe,
Eafe to the body fome, none to the mind
From reftlefs thoughts, that like a deadly fwarm
Of Hornets arm'd, no fooner found alone,
But rufh upon me thronging, and prefent
Times paff, what once I was, and what am now.
O wherefore was my birth from Heaven foretold

Twice

Twice by an Angel; who at last in sight
 Of both my Parents all in flames ascended
 From off the Altar, where an Off'ring burn'd,
 As in a fiery column charioting
 His Godlike presence, and from some great act
 Or benefit reveal'd to *Abraham's* race?
 Why was my breeding order'd and prescrib'd
 As of a person separate to God,
 Design'd for great exploits; if I must die
 Betray'd, Captiv'd, and both my Eyes put out,
 Made of my Enemies the scorn and gaze;
 To grind in Brazen Fetters under task
 With this Heav'n-gifted strength! O glorious strength
 Put to the labour of a Beast, debas'd
 Lower than bondslave! Promise was that I
 Should *Israel* from *Philistian* yoke deliver;
 Ask for this great deliverer now, and find him
 Eyeless in *Gaza* at the Mill with slaves,
 Himself in bonds under *Philistian* yoke;
 Yet stay, let me not rashly call in doubt
 Divine Prediction; what if all foretold
 Had been fulfill'd but through mine own default,
 Whom have I to complain of but my self?
 Who this high gift of strength committed to me,
 In what part lodg'd, how easily bereft me,
 Under the Seal of silence could not keep,
 But weakly to a Woman must reveal it.
 O'ercome with importunity and tears.
 O impotence of mind, in body strong!
 But what is strength without a double share
 Of wisdom, vast, unwieldy, burthensome,
 Proudly secure, yet liable to fall
 By weakest subtilties, not made to rule,
 But to subserve where wisdom bears command.

God,

God, when he gave me strength, to shew withall
 How slight the gift was, hung it in my Hair.
 But Peace, I must not quarrel with the will
 Of highest dispensation, which herein
 Happ'ly had ends above my reach to know:
 Suffices that to me strength is my bane,
 And proves the source of all my miseries;
 So many, and so huge, that each apart
 Would ask a life to wail, but chief of all,
 O loss of sight, of thee I most complain!
 Blind among Enemies, O worse than chains,
 Dungeon, or beggary, decrepit age!
 Light the prime work of God to me is extinct,
 And all her various objects of delight
 Annul'd, which might in part my grief have eas'd,
 Inferiour to the vilest now become
 Of man or worm; the vilest here excell me,
 They creep, yet see, I dark in light expos'd
 To daily fraud, contempt, abuse and wrong,
 Within doors, or without, still as a fool,
 In power of others, never in my own;
 Scarce half I seem to live, dead more than half.
 O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon,
 Irrecoverably dark, total Eclipse
 Without all hope of day!
 O first created Beam, and thou great Word,
 Let there be light, and light was over all;
 Why am I thus bereav'd thy prime decree?
 The Sun to me is dark
 And silent as the Moon,
 When she deserts the night;
 Hid in her vacant interlunar cave.
 Since light so necessary is to life,
 And almost life it self, if it be true

B

That

That light is in the Soul,
 She all in every part; why was the sight
 To such a tender ball as th' eye confin'd?
 So obvious and so easie to be quench't,
 And not as feeling through all parts diffus'd,
 That she might look at will through every pore?
 Then had I not been thus exil'd from light;
 As in the land of darkness yet in light,
 To live a life half dead, a living death,
 And buried; but O yet more miserable!
 My self, my Sepulchre, a moving Grave,
 Buried, yet not exempt
 By privilege of death and burial
 From worst of other evils, pains and wrongs,
 But made hereby obnoxious more
 To all the miseries of life,
 Life in captivity
 Among inhumane foes.
 But who are these? for with joint pace I hear
 The tread of many feet steering this way;
 Perhaps my enemies who come to stare
 At my affliction, and perhaps to insult,
 Their daily practice to afflict me more.

Chor. This, this is he; softly a while,
 Let us not break in upon him;
 O change beyond report, thought or belief!
 See how he lies at random, carelessly diffus'd,
 With languish'd head unpropt,
 As one past hope, abandon'd,
 And by himself given over;
 In slavish habit, ill-fitted weeds
 O'er-worn and soild;
 Or do my eyes misrepresent? Can this be he,

That Heroick, that Renown'd,
 Irresistible *Samson*? whom unarm'd
 No strength of man, or fiercest wild beast could withstand;
 Who tore the Lion, as the Lion tears the Kid,
 Ran on imbattl'd Armies clad in Iron,
 And weaponless himself,
 Made Arms ridiculous, useless the forgery
 Of brazen Shield and Spear, the hammer'd Cuirass,
Chalybean temper'd steel, and frock of mail
 Adamantean Proof;
 But safest he who stood aloof,
 When insupportably his foot advanc'd,
 In scorn of their proud arms and warlike tools,
 Spurn'd them to death by Troops. The bold *Ascalonite*
 Fled from his Lion ramp, old Warriors turn'd
 Their plated backs under his heel;
 Or grovling foild their crested helmets in the dust.
 Then with what trivial weapon came to hand,
 The Jaw of a dead Ass, his sword of bone,
 A thousand fore-skins fell, the flower of *Palestin*
 In *Ramath-lechi* famous to this day:
 Then by main force pull'd up, and on his shoulders bore
 The Gates of *Azza*, Post, and massie Bar
 Up to the Hill by *Hebron*, seat of Giants old,
 No journey of a Sabbath-day, and loaded so;
 Like whom the Gentiles feign to bear up Heav'n.
 Which shall I first bewail,
 Thy Bondage or lost Sight,
 Prison within Prison
 Inseparably dark?
 Thou art become (O worst imprisonment!)
 The Dungeon of thy self; thy Soul
 (Which Men enjoying sight oft without cause complain'd)
 Imprison'd now indeed,

In real darkness of the body dwells,
 Shut up from outward light
 To incorporate with gloomy night;
 For inward light alas
 Puts forth no visual beam.
 O mirror of our fickle state,
 Since man on earth unparallel'd?
 The rarer thy example stands,
 By how much from the top of wondrous glory,
 Strongest of mortal men,
 To lowest pitch of abject fortune thou art fall'n.
 For him I reckon not in high estate
 Whom long descent of birth
 Or the sphear of fortune raises;
 But thee whose strength, while vertue was her mate,
 Might have subdu'd the Earth,
 Universally crown'd with highest praises.

Samf. I hear the sound of words; their sense the air
 Dissolves unjointed e'er it reach my ear.

Chor. He spake, let us draw nigh. Matchless in might,
 The glory late of *Israel*, now the grief,
 We come thy friends and neighbours not unknown
 From *Eshtaol* and *Zora's* fruitfull Vale
 To visit or bewail thee, or if better,
 Counsel or consolation we may bring,
 Salve to thy Sores, apt words have power to swage
 The tumours of a troubl'd mind,
 And are as Balm to fester'd wounds.

Samf. Your coming, Friends, revives me, for I learn
 Now of my own experience, not by talk,
 How counterfeit a coin they are who friends

Bear in their Supercription (of the most
 I would be understood) in prosperous days
 They swarm, but in adverse withdraw their head
 Not to be found, though sought. Ye see, O friends,
 How many evils have enclos'd me round;
 Yet that which was the worst now least afflicts me,
 Blindness, for had I sight, confus'd with shame,
 How could I once look up, or heave the head,
 Who like a foolish Pilot have shipwreck'd
 My Vessel trusted to me from above,
 Gloriously rigg'd; and for a word, a tear,
 Fool, have divulg'd the secret gift of God
 To a deceitfull Woman; tell me, Friends,
 Am I not sung and proverb'd for a Fool
 In every street, do they not say, how well
 Are come upon him his deserts? yet why?
 Immeasurable strength they might behold
 In me, of wisdom nothing more than mean;
 This with the other should, at least, have pair'd,
 These two proportion'd ill drove me transverse.

Chor. Tax not divine disposal: wisest Men
 Have err'd, and by bad Women been deceiv'd;
 And shall again, pretend they ne'er so wise.
 Deject not then so overmuch thy self,
 Who hast of sorrow thy full load besides;
 Yet truth to say, I oft have heard men wonder
 Why thou shouldst wed *Philistian* Woman rather
 Than of thine own Tribe fairer, or as fair,
 At least of thy own Nation, and as noble.

Samf. The first I saw at *Timna*, and she pleas'd
 Me, not my Parents, that I sought to wed,
 The daughter of an Infidel; they knew not

That

That what I mention'd was of God ; I knew
 From intimate impulse, and therefore urg'd
 The Marriage on ; that by occasion hence
 I might begin *Israel's* Deliverance,
 The work to which I was divinely call'd.
 She proving false, the next I took to Wife
 (O that I never had ! fond with too late,)
 Was in the Vale of *Sorec*, *Dalila*,
 That specious Monster, my accomplisht snare.
 I thought it lawfull from my former act,
 And the same end ; still watching to oppress
Israel's Oppressours : of what now I suffer
 She was not the prime cause, but I my self,
 Who vanquisht with a peal of words (O weakness!)
 Gave up my fort of silence to a Woman.

Chor. In seeking just occasion to provoke
 The *Philistine*, thy Countries Enemy,
 Thou never wast remiss, I bear thee witness :
 Yet *Israel* still serves with all his Sons.

Samf. That fault I take not on me, but transfer
 On *Israel's* Governours, and Heads of Tribes,
 Who seeing those great acts which God had done
 Singly by me against their Conquerours
 Acknowledg'd not, or not at all consider'd
 Deliverance offer'd : I on the other side
 Us'd no ambition to commend my deeds,
 The deeds themselves, though mute, spoke loud the doer ;
 But they persisted deaf, and would not seem
 To count them things worth notice, till at length
 Their Lords the *Philistines* with gather'd powers
 Enter'd *Judea* seeking me, who then
 Safe to the rock of *Etham* was retir'd,

Not

Not flying, but fore-casting in what place
 To set upon them what advantag'd best ;
 Mean while the men of *Judah* to prevent
 The harrafs of their Land beset me round ;
 I willingly on some conditions came
 Into their hands, and they as gladly yield me
 To the uncircumcis'd a welcom prey,
 Bound with two cords ; but cords to me were threds
 Toucht with the flame : on their whole Hoast I flew
 Unarm'd, and with a trivial weapon fell'd
 Their choicest youth ; they onely liv'd who fled.
 Had *Judah* that day join'd, or one whole Tribe,
 They had by this possess'd the Towers of *Gath*,
 And lorded over them whom now they serve ;
 But what more oft in Nations grown corrupt,
 And by their vices brought to servitude,
 Than to love Bondage more than Liberty,
 Bondage with ease than strenuous liberty ;
 And to despise, or envy, or suspect
 Whom God hath of his special favour rais'd
 As their Deliverer ; if he aught begin,
 How frequent to desert him, and at last
 To heap ingratitude on worthiest deeds ?

Cho. Thy words to my remembrance bring
 How *Succoth* and the Fort of *Penuel*
 Their great Deliverer contemn'd,
 The matchless *Gideon* in pursuit
 Of *Madian* and her vanquisht Kings :
 And how ingratull *Ephraim*
 Had dealt with *Jephtha*, who by argument,
 Not worse than by his shield and spear
 Defended *Israel* from the *Ammonite*,
 Had not his prowess quell'd their pride

In

In that fore battel when so many dy'd
Without Reprieve adjudg'd to death,
For want of well pronouncing *Shibboleth*.

Samf. Of such examples add me to the roul,
Me easily indeed mine may neglect,
But God's propos'd deliverance not so.

Chor. Just are the ways of God,
And justifiable to Men;
Unless there be who think not God at all,
If any be, they walk obscure;
For of such Doctrine never was there School,
But the heart of the Fool,
And no man therein Doctour but himself.

Yet more there be who doubt his ways not just,
As to his own edicts, found contradicting,
Then give the reins to wandring thought,
Regardless of his Glory's diminution;
Till by their own perplexities involv'd
They ravel more, still less resolv'd,

But never find self-satisfying solution.

As if they would confine th' interminable,
And tie him to his own prescript,

Who made our Laws to bind us, not himself,

And hath full right to exempt

Whom so it pleases him by choice

From National obstriction, without taint

Of sin, or legal debt;

For with his own Laws he can best dispense.

He would not else who never wanted means,

Nor in respect of the enemy just cause

To set his people free,

Have prompted this Heroick *Nazarite*

Against

Against his vow of strictest purity,
To seek in marriage that fallacious Bride,
Unclean, unchaste.

Down Reason then, at least vain reasonings down,
Though Reason here aver
That moral verdict quits her of unclean:
Unchaste was subsequent, her stain not his.

But see here comes thy reverend Sire
With carefull step, Locks white as down,
Old *Manoah*: advise
Forthwith how thou oughtst to receive him.

Samf. Ay me, another inward grief awak'd
With mention of that name renews th' assault.

Man. Brethren and men of *Dan*, for such ye seem,
Though in this uncouth place; if old respect,
As I suppose, toward your once gloryed friend,
My Son now Captive, hither hath inform'd
Your younger feet, while mine cast back with age
Came lagging after; say if he be here.

Chor. As signal now in low dejected state,
As earst in highest, behold him where he lies.

Man. O miserable change! is this the man,
That invincible *Samson*, far renown'd
The dread of *Israel's* foes, who with a strength
Equivalent to Angels walk'd their streets,
None offering fight; who single combatant
Duell'd their Armies rank'd in proud array,
Himself an Army, now unequal match
To save himself against a coward arm'd
At one spears length. O ever failing trust

C

In

In mortal strength ! and oh what not in man
 Deceivable and vain ? Nay what thing good
 Pray'd for, but often proves our woe, our bane ?
 I pray'd for Children, and thought barrenness
 In wedlock a reproach ; I gain'd a Son,
 Such a Son as all men hail'd me happy ;
 Who would be now a Father in my stead ?
 O wherefore did God grant me my request,
 And as a blessing with such pomp adorn'd ?
 Why are his gifts desirable, to tempt
 Our earnest Prayers, then given with solemn hand
 As Graces, draw a Scorpions tail behind ?
 For this did th' Angel twice descend ? for this
 Ordain'd thy nurture holy, as of a Plant ;
 Select and Sacred, Glorious for a while,
 The miracle of men ; then in an hour
 Ensnar'd, assaulted, overcome, led bound,
 Thy Foes derision, Captive, Poor and Blind,
 Into a Dungeon thrust, to work with Slaves ?
 Alas methinks whom God hath chosen once
 To worthiest deeds, if he through frailty err,
 He should not so o'erwhelm, and as a thrall
 Subject him to so foul indignities,
 Be it but for honours sake of former deeds.

Samf. Appoint not heavenly disposition, Father,
 Nothing of all these evils hath befall'n me
 But justly ; I my self have brought them on,
 Sole Authour, I, sole cause : if ought seem vile,
 As vile hath been my folly, who have profan'd
 The mystery of God giv'n me under pledge
 Of vow, and have betray'd it to a woman,
 A *Canaanite*, my faithless enemy.
 This well I knew, nor was at all surpris'd,

But

But warn'd by oft experience : did not she
 Of *Timna* first betray me, and reveal
 The secret wrested from me in her height
 Of Nuptial love profest, carrying it streight
 To them who had corrupted her, my Spies,
 And Rivals ? In this other was there found
 More Faith ? who also in her prime of love,
 Spousal embraces, vitiated with Gold,
 Though offer'd onely, by the scent conceiv'd
 Her spurious first-born ; Treason against me ?
 Thrice she assay'd with flattering prayers and sighs,
 And amorous reproaches to win from me
 My capital secret, in what part my strength
 Lay stor'd, in what part summ'd, that she might know ;
 Thrice I deluded her, and turn'd to sport
 Her importunity, each time perceiving
 How openly, and with what impudence
 She purpos'd to betray me, and (which was worse
 Than undissembl'd hate) with what contempt
 She sought to make me Traitour to my self ;
 Yet the fourth time, when mustering all her wiles,
 With blandish't parlies, feminine assaults,
 Tongue-batteries, she surceas'd not day nor night
 To storm me over-watch'd, and wearied out.
 At times when men seek most repose and rest,
 I yielded, and unlock'd her all my heart,
 Who with a grain of manhood well resolv'd
 Might easily have shook off all her snares :
 But foul effeminacy held me yok'd
 Her bond-slave ; O indignity, O blot
 To Honour and Religion ! servile mind
 Rewarded well with servile punishment !
 The base degree to which I now am fall'n,
 These raggs, this grinding, is not yet so base

C 2

As

As was my former fervitude, ignoble,
Unmanly, ignominious, infamous,
True slavery; and that blindness worse than this,
That saw not how degenerately I serv'd.

Man. I cannot praise thy Marriage choices, Son,
Rather approv'd them not; but thou didst plead
Divine impulsion prompting how thou might'st
Find some occasion to infect our Foes.

I state not that; this I am sure our Foes
Found soon occasion thereby to make thee
Their Captive, and their Triumph; thou the sooner
Temptation found'st, or over-potent charms
To violate the sacred trust of silence
Deposited within thee; which to have kept
Tacit, was in thy power: true; and thou bear'st
Enough, and more the burthen of that fault;
Bitterly hast thou paid, and still art paying
That rigid score. A worse thing yet remains,
This day the *Philistines* a popular Feast
Here celebrate in *Gaza*; and proclaim
Great Pomp, and Sacrifice, and Praises loud
To *Dagon*, as their God who hath deliver'd
Thee, *Samson*, bound and blind into their hands,
Them out of thine, who slew'st them many a slain.
So *Dagon* shall be magnifi'd, and God,
Besides whom is no God, compar'd with Idols,
Disglorifi'd, blasphem'd, and had in scorn
By the Idolatrous rout amidst their wine;
Which to have come to pass by means of thee,
Samson, of all thy sufferings think the heaviest,
Of all reproach the most with shame that ever
Could have befall'n thee and thy Father's house.

Samf.

Samf. Father, I do acknowledge and confess
That I this honour, I this pomp have brought
To *Dagon*, and advanc'd his praises high
Among the Heathen round; to God have brought
Dishonour, obloquy, and op't the mouths
Of Idolists, and Atheists; have brought scandal
To *Israel*, diffidence of God, and doubt
In feeble hearts, propense enough before
To waver, or fall off and joyn with idols,
Which is my chief affliction, shame and sorrow,
The anguish of my Soul, that suffers not
Mine eye to harbour sleep, or thoughts to rest.
This only hope relieves me, that the strife
With me hath end; all the contest is now
'Twixt God and *Dagon*; *Dagon* hath presum'd,
Me overthrown, to enter lists with God,
His Deity comparing and preferring
Before the God of *Abraham*. He, be sure,
Will not connive, or linger, thus provok'd,
But will arise and his great name assert
Dagon must stoop, and shall e'er long receive
Such a discomfit, as shall quite despoil him
Of all these boasted Trophies won on me,
And with confusion blank his Worshipers.

Man. With cause this hope relieves thee, and these words
I as a Prophecy receive: for God,
Nothing more certain, will not long defer
To vindicate the glory of his Name
Against all competition, nor will long
Endure it, doubtfull whether God be Lord,
Or *Dagon*. But for thee what shall be done
Thou must not in the mean while here forget

Lie

Lie in this miserable loathsome plight
Neglected. I already have made way
To some *Philistian* Lords, with whom to treat
About thy rancome: well they may by this
Have satisf'd their utmost of revenge
By pains and slaveries, worse than death inflicted
On thee who now no more canst doe them harm.

Samf. Spare that proposal, Father, spare the trouble
Of that solicitation; let me here,
As I deserve, pay on my punishment;
And expiate, if possible, my crime,
Shamefull garrulity. To have reveal'd
Secrets of men, the secrets of a friend,
How heinous had the fact been, how deserving
Contempt, and scorn of all, to be excluded
All friendship and avoided as a blab,
The mark of fool set on his front?
But I God's counsell have not kept, his holy secret
Presumptuously have publish'd, impiously,
Weakly at least, and shamefully: A sin
That *Gentiles* in their Parables condemn
To their abyfs and horrid pains confin'd.

Man. Be penitent and for thy fault contrite,
But act not in thy own affliction, Son;
Repent the sin, but if the punishment
Thou canst avoid, self preservation-bids;
Or th' execution leave to high disposal,
And let another hand, not thine, exact
Thy penal forfeit from thy self; perhaps
God will relent, and quit thee all his debt;
Who ever more approves and more accepts
(Best pleas'd with humble and filial submission)

Him

Him who imploring mercy sues for life,
Than who self-rigorous chuses death as due;
Which argues over-just, and self-displeas'd
For self-offence, more than for God offended.
Reject not then what offer'd means, who knows
But God hath set before us, to return thee
Home to thy countrey and his Sacred house,
Where thou mayst bring thy off'ings, to avert
His farther ire, with prayers and vows renew'd.

Samf. His pardon I implore; but as for life,
To what end should I seek it? when in strength
All mortals I excell'd, and great in hopes
With youthfull courage and magnanimous thoughts
Of birth from Heav'n foretold and high exploits,
Full of divine instinct, after some proof
Of Acts indeed heroick, far beyond
The Sons of *Anack*, famous now and blaz'd,
Fearless of danger, like a petty God
I walk'd about admir'd of all and dreaded
On hostile ground, none daring my affront.
Then swoll'n with pride into the snare I fell
Of fair fallacious looks, venereal trains,
Softn'd with pleasure and voluptuous life;
At length to lay my head and hollow pledge
Of all my strength in the lascivious lap
Of a deceitfull Concubine who shor'd me
Like a tame Weither, all my pretious fleece,
Then turn'd me, out ridiculous, despoil'd,
Shaven, and disarm'd among mine enemies.

Chor.

Chor. Desire of wine and all delicious drinks
Which many a famous Warriour overturns,
Thou couldst repress, nor did the dancing Ruby
Sparkling, out-pour'd, the flavour or the smell,
Or taste that cheers the hearts of Gods or Men,
Allure thee from the cool Crystalline stream.

Samf. Wherever fountain or fresh current flow'd
Against the Eastern ray, translucent, pure,
With touch aetherial of Heav'n's fiery rod
I drank, from the clear milky juice allaying
Thirst, and refresh'd; nor envy'd them the grape
Whose heads that turbulent liquor fills with fumes.

Chor. O madness, to think use of strongest wines
And strongest drinks our chief support of health,
When God with these forbidd'n made choice to rear
His mighty Champion, strong above compare,
Whose drink was only from the liquid brook.

Sam. But what avail'd this temperance, not complete
Against another object more enticing?
What boots it at one gate to make defence,
And at another, to let in the Foe
Effeminately vanquish'd? by which means,
Now blind, disheartn'd, sham'd, dishonour'd, quell'd,
To what can I be useful, wherein serve
My Nation, and the work from Heav'n impos'd,
But to sit idle on the household hearth,
A burdenous drone; to visitants a gaze,
Or pitied object, these redundant locks
Robustious to no purpose clustring down,
Vain monument of strength; till length of years

And

And sedentary numeness craze my limbs
To a contemptible old age obscure:
Here rather let me drudge and earn my bread,
Till vermin or the draff of servile food
Consume me, and oft invocated death
Hast'n the welcome end of all my pains.

Man. Wilt thou then serve the *Philistines* with that gift
Which was expressly giv'n thee to annoy them?
Better at home lie Bed-rid, not onely idle,
Inglorious, unemploy'd, with age out-worn.
But God who caus'd a Fountain at thy prayer
From the dry ground to spring, thy thirst to allay
After the brunt of Battel, can as easie
Cause light again within thy eyes to spring,
Wherewith to serve him better than thou hast;
And I perswade me so; why else this strength
Miraculous yet remaining in those locks?
His might continues in thee not for naught,
Nor shall his wondrous gifts be frustrate thus.

Sam. All otherwise to me my thoughts portend,
That these dark Orbs no more shall treat with light,
Nor th' other light of life continue long,
But yield to double darkness nigh at hand:
So much I feel my genial Spirits droop,
My hopes all flat, Nature within me seems
In all her functions weary of her self;
My Race of Glory run, and race of shame,
And I shall shortly be with them that rest.

Man. Believe not these suggestions which proceed
From anguish of the mind and humours black,
That mingle with thy fancy. I however

D

Must

Must not omit a Father's timely care
To prosecute the means of thy deliverance
By ransom, or how else: mean while be calm,
And healing words from these thy friends admit.

Sam. O that torment should not be confin'd
To the bodies wounds and sores,
With maladies innumerable
In heart, head, breast and reins;
But must secret passage find
To th' inmost mind,
There exercise all his fierce accidents,
And on her purest spirits prey,
As on entrails, joints and limbs
With answerable pains, but more intense,
Though void of corporal sense.

My griefs not onely pain me
As a lingering disease,
But finding no redress, ferment and rage,
Nor less than wounds immedicable
Rankle, and fester, and gangrene,
To black mortification.
Thoughts my Tormenters arm'd with deadly stings
Mangle my apprehensive tenderest parts,
Exasperate, exulcerate, and raise
Dire inflammation which no cooling herb
Or medicinal liquor can assuage,
Nor breath of Vernal Air from snowy *Alp.*
Sleep hath forsook and giv'n me o'er
To death's benumbing Opium as my onely cure.
Thence faintings, swoonings of despair,
And sense of Heav'n's desertion.

I was his nursing once, and choice delight,
His destin'd from the womb,

Pro:

Promis'd by Heavenly message twice descending,
Under his special eye
Abstemious I grew up and thriv'd amain;
He led me on to mightiest deeds
Above the nerve of mortal arm
Against the uncircumcis'd, our enemies.
But now hath cast me off as never known,
And to those cruel enemies,
Whom I by his appointment had provok'd,
Left me all helpless with th' irreparable loss
Of sight, reserv'd alive to be repeated
The subject of their cruelty or scorn.
Nor am I in the list of them that hope;
Hopeless are all my evils, all remediless;
This one Prayer yet remains, might I be heard,
No long petition, speedy death,
The close of all my miseries, and the balm.

Chor. Many are the Sayings of the Wise
In ancient and in modern books enroll'd;
Extolling Patience as the truest fortitude;
And to the bearing well of all calamities,
All chances incident to man's frail life.
Consolatories writ
With studied argument, and much persuasion fought
Lenient of grief and anxious thought,
But to th' afflicted in his pangs their sound
Little prevails, or rather seems a tune,
Harsh, and of dissonant mood from his complaint,
Unless he feel within
Some source of consolation from above;
Secret refreshings, that repair his strength,
And fainting spirits uphold.

D 2

God

God of our Fathers, what is man!
 That thou towards him with hand so various,
 Or might I say contrarious,
 Temper'st thy providence through his short course,
 Not ev'nly, as thou rul'st
 The Angelick orders and inferiour creatures mute,
 Irrational and brute.
 Nor do I name of men the common rout,
 That wandering loose about,
 Grow up and perish, as the summer flie,
 Heads without name no more remembred,
 But such as thou hast solemnly elected,
 With gifts and graces eminently adorn'd,
 To some great work, thy glory,
 And peoples safety, which in part they effect:
 Yet toward these thus dignifi'd, thou oft
 Amidst their height of noon,
 Change'st thy countenance, and thy hand with no regard
 Of highest favours past
 From thee on them, or them to thee of service.

Nor onely dost degrade them, or remit
 To life obscur'd, which were a fair dismissal,
 But throw'st them lower than thou didst exalt them high,
 Unseemly falls in humane eye,
 Too grievous for the trespass or omission,
 Oft leav'st them to the hostile sword
 Of Heathen and prophane, their Carcasses
 To dogs and fowls a prey, or else captiv'd:
 Or to the unjust tribunals, under change of times,
 And condemnation of the ingratefull multitude.
 If these they scape, perhaps in poverty
 With sickness and disease thou bow'st them down,
 Painfull diseases and deform'd,
 In crude old age:

Though

Though not disordinate, yet causless suff'ring
 The punishment of dissolute days, in fine,
 Just or unjust, alike seem miserable,
 For oft alike, both come to evil end.

So deal not with this once thy glorious Champion,
 The Image of thy strength and mighty Minister.
 What do I beg? how hast thou dealt already?
 Behold him in his state calamitous, and turn
 His labours, for thou canst, to peacefull end.

But who is this, what thing of Sea or Land?

Female of sex it seems,
 That so bedeckt, ornate, and gay,
 Comes this way sailing

Like a stately Ship
 Of *Tarsus*, bound for th' Isles
 Of *Javan* or *Gadier*

With all her bravery on, and tackle trim,
 Sails fill'd, and streamers waving,
 Courted by all the winds that hold them play,
 An Amber scent of odorous perfume
 Her harbinger, a damsel train behind;
 Some rich *Philistian* Matron she may seem,
 And now at nearer view, no other certain
 Than *Dalila* thy Wife.

Samf. My Wife, my Trayt'refs, let her not come near me,

Cho. Yet on she moves, now stands and eyes thee fix'd,
 About t' have spoke, but now, with head declin'd,
 Like a fair flower surcharg'd with dew, she weeps
 And words address'd seem into tears dissolv'd,
 Wetting the borders of her silk'n veil:
 But now again she makes address to speak.

Dal.

Dal. With doubtfull feet and wavering resolution
I came, still dreading thy displeasure, *Samson*,
Which to have merited, without excuse,
I cannot but acknowledge; yet if tears
May expiate (though the fact more evil drew
In the perverse event than I foresaw)
My penance hath not slackn'd, though my pardon
No way assur'd. But conjugal affection
Prevailing over fear, and timorous doubt
Hath lead me on desirous to behold
Once more thy face, and know of thy estate.
If aught in my ability may serve
To light'n what thou suffer'st, and appease
Thy mind with what amends is in my power,
Though late, yet in some part to recompense
My rash, but more unfortunate misdeed.

Samf. Out, out *Hyæna*; these are thy wonted arts,
And arts of every woman false like thee,
To break all faith, all vows, deceive, betray,
Then as repentant to submit, beseech,
And reconciliation move with feign'd remorse,
Confess, and promise wonders in her change,
Not truly penitent, but chief to try
Her husband, how far urg'd his patience bears,
His virtue or weakness which way to assail:
Then with more cautious and instructed skill
Again transgresses, and again submits;
That wisest and best men full oft beguil'd,
With goodness princip'd not to reject
The penitent, but ever to forgive,
Are drawn to wear out miserable days,
Entangl'd with a poysonous bosome snake,

If not by quick destruction soon cut off
As I by thee, to Ages an example.

Dal. Yet hear me, *Samson*; not that I endeavour
To lessen or extenuate my offence,
But that on th' other side if it be weigh'd
By it self, with aggravations not surcharg'd,
Or else with just allowance counterpois'd,
I may, if possible, thy pardon find
The easier towards me, or thy hatred less.
First granting, as I do, it was a weakness
In me, but incident to all our sex,
Curiosity, inquisitive, importune
Of secrets, then with like infirmity
To publish them, both common female faults:
Was it not weakness also to make known
For importunity, that is, for naught,
Wherein consisted all thy strength and safety?
To what I did thou shew'd'st me first the way.
But I to enemies reveal'd, and should not.
Nor should'st thou have trusted that to woman's frailty
E'er I to thee, thou to thy self wast cruel.
Let weakness then with weakness come to parl
So near related, or the same of kind,
Thine forgive mine; that men may censure thine
The gentler, if severely thou exact not
More strength from me, than in thy self was found.
And what if Love, which thou interpret'st hate,
The jealousy of Love, powerfull of sway
In humane hearts, nor less in mine towards thee,
Caus'd what I did? I saw thee mutable
Of fancy, fear'd lest one day thou would'st leave me
As her at *Timna*, fought by all means therefore
How to endear, and hold thee to me firmest:

No

No better way I saw than by importuning
 To learn thy secrets, get into my power
 Thy key of strength and safety : thou wilt say,
 Why then reveal'd ? I was assur'd by those
 Who tempted me, that nothing was design'd
 Against thee but safe custody, and hold :
 That made for me, I knew that liberty
 Would draw thee forth to perilous enterprizes,
 While I at home sat full of cares and fears
 Wailing thy absence in my widow'd bed ;
 Here I should still enjoy thee day and night
 Mine and Love's prisoner, not the *Philistines*,
 Whole to my self, unhazarded abroad,
 Fearless at home of partners in my love.
 These reasons in Love's law have pass'd for good,
 Though fond and reasonless to some perhaps,
 And Love hath oft, well meaning, wrought much wo,
 Yet always pity or pardon hath obtain'd.
 Be not unlike all others, not austere
 As thou art strong, inflexible as steel.
 If thou in strength all mortals dost exceed,
 In uncompassionate anger do not so.

Sam. How cunningly the Sorcerers displays
 Her own transgressions, to upbraid me mine ?
 That malice not repentance brought thee higher,
 By this appears : I gave, thou say'st, th' example,
 I led the way, bitter reproach, but true,
 I to my self was false e'er thou to me,
 Such pardon therefore as I give my folly,
 Take to thy wicked deed : which when thou seest
 Impartial, self-severe, inexorable,
 Thou wilt renounce thy seeking, and much rather
 Confess it feign'd, weakness is thy excuse.

And I believe it, weakness to resist
Philistian gold : if weakness may excuse,
 What Murderer, what Traytor, Paricide,
 Incestuous, Sacrilegious, but may plead it ?
 All wickedness is weakness : that plea therefore
 With God or Man will gain thee no remission.
 But Love constrain'd thee ; call it furious rage
 To satisfy thy lust : Love seeks to have Love ;
 My love how couldst thou hope, who took'st the way
 To raise in me inexorable hate,
 Knowing, as needs I must, by thee betray'd ?
 In vain thou striv'st to cover shame with shame,
 Or by evasions thy crime uncover'st more.

Dal. Since thou determin'st weakness for no plea
 In man or woman, though to thy own condemning,
 Hear what assaults I had, what snares besides,
 What sieges girt me round, e'er I consented ;
 Which might have aw'd the best resolv'd of Men,
 The constantest, to have yielded without blame.
 It was not Gold, as to my charge thou lay'st,
 That wrought with me : thou know'st the Magistrates
 And Princes of my country came in person,
 Solicited, commanded, threatn'd, urg'd,
 Adjur'd by all the bonds of civil Duty
 And of Religion, press'd how just it was
 How honourable, how glorious to entrap
 A common enemy, who had destroy'd
 Such numbers of our Nation : and the Priest
 Was not behind, but ever at my ear,
 Preaching how meritorious with the Gods
 It would be to ensnare an irreligious
 Dishonourer of *Dagon* : what had I
 To oppose against such powerfull Arguments ?

Onely my love of thee held long debate;
 And combated in silence all these reasons
 With hard contest: at length that ground'd maxim
 So ripe and celebrated in the mouths
 Of wisest men; that to the publick good
 Private respects must yield; with grave authority
 Took full possession of me and prevail'd;
 Vertue, as I thought, truth, duty so enjoyning.

Samf. I thought where all thy circling wiles would end;
 In feign'd Religion, smooth hypocrisie.
 But had thy love, still odiously pretended,
 Been, as it ought, sincere, it would have taught thee
 Far other reasonings, brought forth other deeds.
 I before all the daughters of my Tribe
 And of my Nation chose thee from among
 My enemies, lov'd thee, as too well thou knew'st,
 Too well, unbosom'd all my secrets to thee,
 Not out of levity, but over-powr'd
 By thy request, who could deny thee nothing;
 Yet now am judg'd an enemy. Why then
 Didst thou at first receive me for thy Husband?
 Then, as since then, thy countries foe protest:
 Being once a Wife, for me thou wast to leave
 Parents and countrey; nor was I their subject,
 Nor under their protection but my own,
 Thou mine, not theirs: if aught against my life
 Thy Countrey sought of thee, it sought unjustly,
 Against the law of nature, law of nations,
 No more thy Countrey, but an impious crew
 Of men conspiring to uphold their state
 By worse than hostile deeds, violating the ends
 For which our Countrey is a name so dear;
 Not therefore to be obey'd. But zeal mov'd thee;

To please thy Gods thou didst it; Gods unable
 To acquit themselves and prosecute their Foes
 But by ungodly deeds, the contradiction
 Of their own Deity, Gods cannot be:
 Less therefore to be pleas'd, obey'd, or fear'd,
 These false pretexts and varnish'd colours failing,
 Bare in thy guilt how foul must thou appear?

Dal. In argument with Men a Woman ever
 Goes by the worse, whatever be her cause.

Samf. For want of words no doubt, or lack of breath,
 Witness when I was worried with thy peals.

Dal. I was a fool, too rash, and quite mistaken
 In what I thought would have succeeded best.
 Let me obtain forgiveness of thee, *Samson*,
 Afford me place to shew what recompence
 Towards thee I intend for what I have misdone,
 Misguided; onely what remains past cure
 Bear not too sensibly, nor still insist
 To afflict thy self in vain: though sight be lost,
 Life yet hath many solaces, enjoy'd
 Where other senses want not their delights
 At home in leisure and domestick ease,
 Exempt from many a care and chance to which
 Eye-sight exposes daily men abroad.
 I to the Lords will intercede, not doubting
 Their favourable ear, that I may fetch thee
 From forth this loathsome prison-house, to abide
 With me, where my redoubl'd love and care
 With nursing diligence, to me glad office,
 May ever tend about thee to old age
 With all things gratefull chear'd, and so supply'd,

That what by me thou hast lost thou least shalt miss.

Samf. No, no, of my condition take no care;
It fits not; thou and I long since are twain;
Nor think me so unwary or accurst
To bring my feet again into the snare
Where once I have been caught; I know thy trains
Though dearly to my cost, thy ginns, and toys;
Thy fair enchanted cup, and warbling charms
No more on me have power, their force is null'd,
So much of Adders wisdom I have learnt
To fence my ear against thy Sorceries.
If in my flower of youth and strength, when all men
Lov'd, honour'd, fear'd me, thou alone couldst hate me
Thy Husband, slight me, sell me, and forgo me;
How wouldst thou use me now, blind, and thereby
Deceivable, in most things as a child
Helpless, thence easily contemn'd, and scorn'd,
And last neglected? How wouldst thou insult
When I must live uxorious to thy will
In perfect thralldom, how again betray me,
Bearing my words and doings to the Lords
To gloss upon, and censuring, frown or smile?
This Gaol I count the House of Liberty
To thine, whose doors my feet shall never enter.

Dal. Let me approach at least, and touch thy hand.

Samf. Not for thy life, lest fierce remembrance wake
My sudden rage to tear thee joint by joint.
At distance I forgive thee, go with that;
Bewail thy falshood, and the pious works
It hath brought forth to make thee memorable
Among illustrious Women, faithfull Wives:

Cherish

Cherish thy hastn'd widowhood with the gold
Of Matrimonial treason: so farewell.

Dal. Hee thou art implacable, more deaf
To prayers than winds and seas, yet winds to seas
Are reconcil'd at length, and sea to shore:
Thy anger unappeasable, still rages,
Eternal Tempest never to be calm'd.
Why do I humble thus my self, and suing
For peace, reap nothing but repulse and hate?
Bid go with evil omen and the brand
Of infamy upon my name denounc'd?
To mix with thy concernments I desist
Henceforth, nor too much disapprove my own.
Fame if not double-fac'd is double-mouth'd,
And with contrary blast proclaims most deeds,
On both his Wings, one black, th' other white,
Bears greatest names in his wild aerie flight.
My name perhaps among the Circumcis'd
In *Dan*, in *Judah*, and the bordering Tribes,
To all posterity may stand defam'd,
VVith malediction mention'd, and the blot
Of falshood most unconjugal traduc'd.
But in my countrey where I most desire,
In *Ecron*, *Gaza*, *Asdod*, and in *Gath*,
I shall be nam'd among the famouslest
Of Women, sung at solemn festivals,
Living and dead recorded, who to save
Her countrey from a fierce destroyer, chose
Above the faith of wedlock-bands, my tomb
VVith odours visited and annual flowers.
Not less renown'd than in Mount *Ephraim*,
Jael, who with inhospitable guile
Smote *Sisera* sleeping through the Temples nail'd.

Nor

Nor shall I count it heinous to enjoy
The publick marks of honour and reward
Confer'd upon me, for the piety
Which to my countrey I was judg'd to have shewn.
At this who ever envies or repines
I leave him to his lot, and like my own.

Chor. She's gone, a manifest Serpent by her sting
Discover'd in the end, till now conceal'd.

Samf. So let her go, God sent her to debase me,
And aggravate my folly, who committed
To such a viper his most sacred trust
Of secrecie, my safety, and my life.

Chor. Yet beauty, though injurious, hath strange power,
After offence returning, to regain
Love once posselt, nor can be easily
Repulst, without much inward passion felt
And secret sting of amorous remorse.

Samf. Love quarrels oft in pleasing concord end.
Not wedlock-treachery endangering life.

Chor. It is not vertue, wisdom, valour, wit,
Strength, comeliness of shape, or amplest merit
That Woman's love can win or long inherit;
But what it is, hard is to say,
Harder to hit,

(Which way soever Men refer it)
Much like thy riddle, *Samson*, in one day
Or seven, though one should musing sit;

If any of these or all, the *Tinnian* bride
Had not so soon preferr'd

Thy

Thy Paranymp, worthless to thee compar'd
Successour in thy Bed,
Nor both so loosely disally'd
Their nuptials, nor this last so treacherously
Had shorn the fatal Harveft of thy Head.
Is it for that such outward ornament
Was lavish'd on their Sex, that inward gifts
Were left for haste unfinish'd, judgment scant,
Capacity not rais'd to apprehend
Or value what is best
In choice, but ofttest to affect the wrong?
Or was too much of self-love mixt,
Of constancy no root infix'd,
That either they love nothing, or not long?

What e'er it be, to wisest Men and best
Seeming at first all heavenly under virgin Veil,
Soft, modest, meek, demure,
Once joyn'd, the contrary she proves, a Thorn
Intestine, far within defensive arms
A cleaving mischief, in his way to vertue
Adverse and turbulent, or by her charms
Draws him awry enslav'd
With dotage, and his sense deprav'd
To folly and shamefull deeds which ruine ends.
What Pilot so expert but needs must wreck
Embarqu'd with such a Stears-mate at the Helm?

Favour'd of Heav'n who finds
One vertuous rarely found,
That in domestick good combines:
Happy that house! his way to peace is smooth:
But Vertue which breaks through all opposition,
And all temptation can remove,
Most shines and most is acceptable above.

There

Therefore Gods universal Law
Gave to the Man despotick power
Over his Female in due awe,
Nor from that right to part an hour;
Smile she or lowre:
So shall he least confusion draw
On his whole life; not sway'd
By female usurpation, or dismay'd.
But had we best retire, I see a storm?

Samf. Fair days have oft contracted wind and rain;

Chor. But this another kind of tempest brings.

Samf. Be less abstruse, my riddling days are past.

Chor. Look now for no enchanting voice, nor fear
The bait of honied words; a rougher tongue
Draws hitherward, I know him by his stride,
The Giant *Harapha* of *Gath*, his look
Haughty as is his pile high-built and proud.
Comes he in peace? what wind hath blown him hither
I less conjecture than when first I saw
The sumptuous *Dalila* floating this way:
His habit carries peace, his brow defiance.

Samf. Or peace or not, alike to me he comes.

Chor. His freight we soon shall know, he now arrives.

Har. I come not, *Samson*, to condole thy chance,
As these perhaps, yet wish it had not been,
Though for no friendly intent. I am of *Gath*,
Men call me *Harapha*, of stock renown'd

As *Og* or *Anak* and the *Emims* old
That *Kariatbaim* held, thou know'st me now
If thou at all art known. Much I have heard
Of thy prodigious might and feats perform'd
Incredible to me, in this displeas'd,
That I was never present on the place
Of those encounters, where we might have try'd
Each others force in camp or list'd field:
And now am come to see of whom such noise
Hath walk'd about, and each limb to survey,
If thy appearance answer loud report.

Samf. The way to know were not to see but taste.

Har. Dost thou already single me? I thought
Gieves and the Mill had tam'd thee. O that fortune
Had brought me to the field where thou art fam'd
To have wrought such wonders with an Asses Jaw;
I should have forc'd thee soon with other arms,
Or left thy carcass where the Ass lay thrown:
So had the glory of Prowess been recover'd
To *Palestine*, won by a *Philistine*
From the unforeskin'd race, of whom thou bear'st
The highest name for valiant Acts, that honour
Certain to have won by mortal duel from thee,
I lose, prevented by thy eyes put out.

Samf. Boast not of what thou wouldst have done, but *doe*
What then thou wouldst, thou seest it in thy hand.

Har. To combat with a blind Man I disdain,
And thou hast need much washing to be touch'd.

Samf. Such usage as your honourable Lords
Afford me assassinated and betray'd,

Who durst not with their whole united powers
 In fight withstand me single and unarm'd,
 Nor in the house with chamber Ambushes
 Close-banded durst attaque me, no not sleeping,
 Till they had hir'd a woman with their gold
 Breaking her Marriage Faith to circumvent me.
 Therefore without feign'd shifts let be assign'd
 Some narrow place enclos'd, where fight may give thee,
 Or rather flight, no great advantage on me;
 Then put on all thy gorgeous arms, thy Helmet
 And Brigandine of brasse, thy broad Habergeon,
 Vant-bras and Greves, and Gauntlet, and thy Spear
 A Weavers beam, and seven-times-folded shield,
 I onely with an Oak'n-staff will meet thee,
 And raise such out-cries on thy clatter'd Iron,
 Which long shall not with-hold me from thy head,
 That in a little time while breath remains thee,
 Thou oft shalt wish thy self at Gath to boast
 Again in safety what thou wouldst have done
 To Samson, but shalt never see Gath more.

Har. Thou durst not thus disparage glorious arms
 Which greatest Heroes have in battel worn,
 Their ornament and safety, had not spells
 And black enchantments, some Magicians Art
 Arm'd thee or charm'd thee strong, which thou from Heaven
 Feign'dst at thy Birth was given thee in thy Hair,
 Where strength can least abide, though all thy Hairs
 Were bristles rang'd like those that ridge the back
 Of chaf'd wild Boars, or ruff'd Porcupines.

Samf. I know no Spells, use no forbidden Arts;
 My trust is in the living God who gave me

At my Nativity this strength, diffus'd
 No less through all my sinews, joints and bones,
 Than thine, while I preserv'd these locks unshorn,
 The pledge of my unviolated vow.
 For proof hereof, if Dagon be thy god,
 Go to his Temple, invoke his aid
 With solemnest devotion, spread before him
 How highly it concerns his glory now
 To frustrate and dissolve these Magick spells,
 Which I to be the power of Israel's God
 Avow, and challenge Dagon to the test,
 Offering to combat thee his Champion bold,
 With th' utmost of his Godhead seconded;
 Then thou shalt see, or rather to thy sorrow
 Soon feel, whose God is strongest, thine or mine.

Har. Presume not on thy God, what e'er he be,
 Thee he regards not, owns not, hath cut off
 Quite from his people, and delivered up
 Into thy Enemies hand, permitted them
 To put out both thine eyes, and fetter'd send thee
 Into the common Prison, there to grind
 Among the Slaves and Asses thy comrades,
 As good for nothing else, no better service
 With those thy boystrous locks, no worthy match
 For valour to assail, nor by the sword
 Of noble Warriour, so to stain his honour,
 But by the Barbers razor best subdu'd.

Samf. All these indignities, for such they are
 From thine, these evils I deserve and more,
 Acknowledge them from God inflicted on me
 Justly, yet despair not of his final pardon
 Whose ear is ever open; and his eye

Gracious to re-admit the suppliant ;
In confidence whereof I once again
Defie thee to the trial of mortal fight,
By combat to decide whose God is God,
Thine or whom I with *Israel's* Sons adore.

Har. Fair honour that thou dost thy God, in trusting
He will accept thee to defend his cause,
A Murtherer, a Revolter, and a Robber.

Sam. Tongue-doughty Giant, how dost thou prove me these?

Har. Is not thy Nation subject to our Lords?
Their Magistrates confest it, when they took thee
As a League-breaker and deliver'd bound
Into our hands: for hadst thou not committed
Notorious murder on those thirty men
At *Askalon*, who never did thee harm,
Then like a Robber strip'dst them of their robes?
The *Philistines*, when thou hadst broke the league,
Went up with armed powers thee onely seeking,
To others did no violence nor spoil.

Samf. Among the Daughters of the *Philistines*
I chose a Wife, which argu'd me no foe;
And in your City held my Nuptial Feast:
But your ill-meaning Politician Lords,
Under pretence of Bridal friends and guests,
Appointed to await me thirty Spies,
Who threatning cruel death constrain'd the Bride
To wring from me and tell to them my secret,
That solv'd the riddle which I had propos'd.
When I perceiv'd all set on enmity,
As on my enemies, where ever chanc'd,

I us'd

I us'd hostility, and took their spoil
To pay my underminers in their coin.
My Nation was subjected to your Lords.
It was the force of Conquest; force with force
Is well ejected when the Conquer'd can.
But I a private person, whom my Countrey
As a league-breaker gave up bound, presum'd
Single Rebellion and did hostile Acts.
I was no private but a person rais'd
With strength sufficient and command from Heav'n
To free my Countrey; if their servile minds
Me their deliverer sent would not receive,
But to their Masters gave me up for nought,
Th' unworthier they; whence to this day they serve.
I was to doe my part from Heav'n assign'd,
And had perform'd it if thy known offence
Had not disabl'd me, not all your force:
These shifts refuted, answer my appellant
Though by his blindness main'd for high attempts,
Who now defies thee thrice to single fight,
As a petty enterprize of small enforce.

Har. With thee a man condemn'd, a Slave enrol'd,
Due by the Law to capital punishment
To fight with thee no man of arms will deign.

Samf. Cam'st thou for this, vain boaster, to survey me,
To descant on my strength, and give thy verdict?
Come nearer, part not hence so slight inform'd;
But take good heed my hand survey not thee.

Har. O *Baal-zebub*! can my ears unus'd
Hear these dishonours, and not render death?

Samf.

Samf. No man withholds thee, nothing from thy hand
Fear I incurable; bring up thy van,
My heels are fetter'd, but my fist is free.

Har. This insolence other kind of answer fits.

Samf. Go baff'd coward, lest I run upon thee,
Though in these chains, bulk without spirit vast,
And with one buffet lay thy structure low,
Or swing thee in the Air, then dash thee down
To th' hazard of thy brains and shatter'd sides.

Har. By *Astaroth* e'er long thou shalt lament
These braveries in Irons loaden on thee.

Chor. His Giantship is gone somewhat crest-fall'n,
Stalking with less unconscionable strides,
And lower looks, but in a sultrier chafe.

Samf. I dread him not, nor all his Giant-brood,
Though fame divulg'd him Father of five Sons
All of Gigantick size, *Goliath* chief.

Chor. He will directly to the Lords, I fear,
And with malicious counsel stir them up
Some way or other farther to afflict thee.

Samf. He must alledge some cause, and offer'd fight
Will not dare mention, lest a question rise
Whether he durst accept the offer or not,
And that he durst not plain enough appear'd.
Much more affliction than already felt
They cannot well impose, nor I sustain;
If they intend advantage of my labours

The work of many hands, which earns my keeping
With no small profit daily to my owners.
But come what will, my deadliest foe will prove
My speediest friend, by death to rid me hence,
The worst that he can give, to me the best.
Yet so it may fall out, because their end
Is hate, not help to me, it may with mine
Draw their own ruine who attempt the deed

Chor. Oh how comely it is and how reviving
To the Spirits of just men long oppress'd!
When God into the hands of their deliverer
Puts invincible might
To quell the mighty of the Earth, th' oppressour,
The brute and boist'rous force of violent men
Hardy and industrious to support
Tyrannick power, but raging to pursue
The righteous and all such as honour Truth;
He all their Ammunition
And feats of War defeats
With plain Heroick magnitude of mind
And celestial vigour arm'd,
Their Armories and Magazines contemns,
Renders them useless, while
With winged expedition
Swift as the lightning glance he executes
His errand on the wicked, who surpriz'd
Lose their defence distracted and amaz'd.

But patience is more oft the exercise
Of Saints, the trial of their fortitude,
Making them each his own Deliverer,
And Victor over all
That tyranny or fortune can inflict;
Either of these is in thy lot,

Samson, with might endu'd
Above the Sons of men ; but fight bereav'd
May chance to number thee with those
Whom Patience finally must crown.
This Idols day hath been to thee no day of rest,

Labouring thy mind
More than the working day thy hands,
And yet perhaps more trouble is behind.
For I descry this way

Some other tending, in his hand
A Sceptre or quaint Staff he bears,
Comes on amain, speed in his look
By his habit I discern him now
A Publick Officer, and now at hand,
His message will be short and voluble.

Off. Hebrews the Pris'ner *Samson* here I seek.

Chor. His manacles remark him, there he sits.

Off. *Samson*, to thee our Lords thus bid me say ;
This day to *Dagon* is a solemn Feast,
With Sacrifices, Triumph, Pomp and Games ;
Thy strength they know surpassing humane race,
And now some publick proof thereof require
To honour this great Feast, and great Assembly ;
Rise therefore with all speed and come along,
Where I will see thee heartn'd and fresh clad
To appear as fits before th' illustrious Lords.

Samf. Thou know'st I am an Hebrew, therefore tell them,
Our Law forbids at their Religious Rites
My presence ; for that cause I cannot come.

Off. This answer be assur'd, will not content them.

Samf. Have they not sword-players, and ev'ry sort
Of Gymnick Artists, Wrestlers, Riders, Runners,
Juglers and Dancers, Anticks, Mummers, Mimirs,
But they must pick me out with shackles tir'd,
And over-labour'd at their publick Mill,
To make them sport with blind activity ?
Do they not seek occasion of new quarrels
On my refusal to distress me more,
Or make a game of my calamities ?
Return the way thou cam'st, I will not come.

Off. Regard thy self, this will offend them highly.

Samf. My self? my conscience and internal peace.
Can they think me so broken, so debas'd
With corporal servitude, that my mind ever
Will condescend to such absurd commands ?
Although their drudge, to be their fool or jester,
And in my midst of sorrow and heart-grief
To shew them feats, and play before their god,
The worst of all indignities, yet on me
Joyn'd with extreme contempt ? I will not come.

Off. My message was impos'd on me with speed,
Brooks no delay : is this thy resolution ?

Samf. So take it with what speed thy message needs.

Off. I am sorry what this stoutness will produce.

Samf. Perhaps thou shalt have cause to sorrow indeed.

G

Chor.

Chor. Consider, *Samson*; matters now are strain'd
Up to the height, whether to hold or break;
He's gone, and who knows how he may report
Thy words by adding fuel to the flame?
Expect another message more imperious,
More Lordly thund'ring than thou wilt bear.

Samf. Shall I abuse this Consecrated gift
Of strength, again returning with my hair
After my great transgression, so requite
Favour renew'd, and add a greater sin
By prostituting holy things to Idols;
A *Nazarite* in place abominable
Vaunting my strength in honour to their *Dagon*?
Besides, how vile, contemptible, ridiculous,
What act more execrably unclean, prophane?

Chor. Yet with this strength thou serv'st the *Philistines*,
Idolatrous, uncircumcis'd, unclean.

Samf. Not in their Idol-worship, but by labour
Honest and lawfull to deserve my food
Of those who have me in their civil power.

Chor. Where the heart joins not, outward acts defile not.

Samf. Where outward force constrains, the sentence holds
But who constrains me to the Temple of *Dagon*,
Not dragging? the *Philistian* Lords command.
Commands are no constraints. If I obey them,
I doe it freely, ventring to displease
God for the fear of Man and Man prefer,
Set God behind: which in his jealousy

Shall

Shall never, unrepented, find forgiveness,
Yet that he may dispense with me or thee
Present in Temples at Idolatrous Rites
For some important cause, thou needst not doubt.

Chor. How thou wilt here come off furmounts my reach.

Samf. Be of good courage, I begin to feel
Some rousing motions in me which dispose
To something extraordinary my thoughts.
I with this Messenger will go along,
Nothing to doe, be sure, that may dishonour
Our Law, or stain my vow of *Nazarite*.
If there be ought of presage in the mind,
This day will be remarkable in my life
By some great act, or of my days the last.

Chor. In time thou hast resolv'd, the man returns.

Off. *Samson*, this second message from our Lords
To thee I am bid say. Art thou our Slave,
Our Captive, at the publick Mill our drudge,
And dar'st thou at our sending and commanding
Dispute thy coming? come without delay;
Or we shall find such Engines to assail
And hamper thee, as thou shalt come of force,
Though thou art firmler fastn'd than a Rock.

Samf. I could be well content to try their Art,
Which to no few of them would prove pernicious.
Yet knowing their advantages too many,
Because they shall not trail me through their streets
Like a wild Beast, I am content to go.
Masters commands come with a power resistless.

G 2

To

To such as owe them absolute subjection;
And for a life who will not change his purpose?
(So mutable are all the ways of men)
Yet this be sure, in nothing to comply
Scandalous or forbidden in our Law.

Off. I praise thy resolution, doff these links:
By this compliance thou wilt win the Lords
To favour, and perhaps to set thee free.

Samf. Brethren farewell, your company along
I will not wish, lest it perhaps offend them
To see me girt with Friends; and how the sight
Of me as of a common Enemy,
So dreaded once, may now exasperate them
I know not: Lords are Lordliest in their wine;
And the well-feasted Priest then soonest fir'd
With zeal, if aught Religion seem concern'd:
No less the People on their Holy-days
Impetuous, insolent, unquenchable;
Happ'n what may, of me expect to hear
Nothing dishonourable, impure, unworthy
Our God, our Law; my Nation or my self,
The last of me or no I cannot warrant.

Chor. Go, and the Holy One
Of *Israel* be thy guide
To what may serve his glory best, and spread his name
Great among the Heathen round:
Send the Angel of thy Birth to stand
Fast by thy side, who from thy Father's field
Rode up in flames after his message told
Of thy conception, and be now a shield
Of fire; that Spirit that first rusht on thee

In the Camp of *Dan*
Be efficacious in thee now at need.
For never was from Heaven imparted
Measure of strength so great to mortal seed;
As in thy wondrous actions hath been seen.
But wherefore comes old *Manoa* in such haste
With youthfull steps? much livelier than e'er while
He seems: supposing here to find his Son,
Or of him bringing to us some glad news?

Man. Peace with you, Brethren; my inducement hither
Was not at present here to find my Son,
By order of the Lords new parted hence
To come and play before them at their Feast.
I heard all as I came, the City rings
And numbers thither flock, I had no will,
Lest I should see him forc'd to things unseemly.
But that which mov'd my coming now, was chiefly
To give you part with me what hope I have
With good success to work his liberty.

Chor. That hope would much rejoyce us to partake
With thee; say, reverend Sire, We thirst to hear.

Man. I have attempted one by one the Lords
Either at home, or through the high street passing,
With supplication prone and Fathers tears
To accept of ranfome for my Son their pris'oner,
Some much averse I found and wondrous harsh,
Contemptuous, proud, set on revenge and spite;
That part most reverenc'd *Dagon* and his priests,
Others more moderate seeming, but their aim
Private reward, for which both God and State
They easily would set to sale, a third

More

More generous far and civil, who confess'd
They had enough reveng'd, having reduc'd
Their foe to misery beneath their fears,
The rest was magnanimity to remit,
If some convenient ransom were propos'd.
What noise or shout was that? it tore the Skie.

Chor. Doubtless the people shouting to behold
Their once great dread, captive, and blind before them,
Or at some proof of strength before them shown.

Man. His ransom, if my whole inheritance
May compass it, shall willingly be paid
And number'd down: much rather I shall chuse
To live the poorest in my Tribe, than richest,
And he in that calamitous prison left.
No, I am fixt not to part hence without him.
For his redemption all my Patrimony,
If need be, I am ready to forgo
And quit: not wanting him, I shall want nothing.

Chor. Fathers are wont to lay up for their Sons,
Thou for thy Son art bent to lay out all;
Sons wont to nurse their Parents in old age,
Thou in old age can'st how to nurse thy Son
Made older than thy age through eye-sight lost.

Man. It shall be my delight to tend his eyes,
And view him sitting in the house, enobl'd
With all those high exploits by him achiev'd,
And on his shoulders waving down those locks,
That of a Nation arm'd the strength contain'd:
And I persuade me God hath not permitted
His strength again to grow up with his hair

Garrison'd

Garrison'd round about him like a Camp
Of faithfull Souldiery, were not his purpose
To use him farther yet in some great service,
Not to sit idle with so great a gift
Useless, and thence ridiculous about him.
And since his strength with eye-sight was not lost,
God will restore him eye-sight to his strength.

Chor. Thy hopes are not ill founded nor seem vain
Of his delivery, and thy joy thereon
Conceiv'd, agreeable to a Father's love,
In both which we, as next, participate.

Man. I know your friendly minds and—O what noise!
Mercy of Heav'n what hideous noise was that!
Horribly loud unlike the former shout.

Chor. Noise call you it or universal groan
As if the whole inhabitation perish'd,
Bloud, death, and deathfull deeds are in that noise,
Ruine, destruction at the utmost point.

Man. Of ruine indeed me-thought I heard the noise,
Oh it continues, they have slain my Son.

Chor. Thy Son is rather slaying them, that outcry
From slaughter of one Foe could not ascend.

Man. Some dismal accident it needs must be;
What shall we doe, stay here or run and see?

Chor. Best keep together here, lest running thither
We unawares run into danger's mouth.
This evil on the *Philistines* is fall'n,

From

From whom could else a general cry be heard?
The sufferers then will scarce molest us here,
From other hands we need not much to fear.
What if his eye-sight (for to *Israel's* God
Nothing is hard) by miracle restor'd,
He now be dealing dole among his foes,
And over heaps of slaughter'd walk his way?

Man. That were a joy presumptuous to be thought.

Chor. Yet God hath wrought things as incredible
For his people of old; what hinders now?

Man. He can I know, but doubt to think he will;
Yet Hope would fain subscribe and tempts Belief.
A little stay will bring some notice hither.

Chor. Of good or bad so great, of bad the sooner;
For evil news rides post, while good news baits.
And to our wish I see one hither speeding,
An *Hebrew*, as I guess, and of our Tribe.

Meff. O whither shall I run, or which way flee
The sight of this so horrid spectacle
Which erst my eyes beheld and yet behold?
For dire imagination still pursues me.
But providence or instinct of nature seems,
Or reason though disturb'd, and scarce consulted
To have guided me aright, I know not how,
To the first reverend *Manoa*, and to these
My Countreymen, whom here I knew remaining,
As at some distance from the place of horror,
So in the sad event too much concern'd.

Man. The accident was loud, and heard before thee
With ruefull cry, yet what it was we hear not,
No Preface needs, thou seest we long to know.

Meff. It would burst forth, but I recover breath
And sense distract, to know well what I utter.

Man. Tell us the sum, the circumstance defer.

Meff. *Gaza* yet stands, but all her Sons are fall'n,
All in a moment overwhelm'd and fall'n.

Man. Sad, but thou know'st to *Israelites* not saddest
The desolation of a Hostile City.

Meff. Feed on that first, there may in grief be surfeit.

Ma. Relate by whom. *Meff.* By *Samson*. *Ma.* That still lessens
The sorrow, and converts it nigh to joy.

Meff. Ah *Manoa*, I refrain, too suddenly
To utter what will come at last too soon;
Left evil tidings with too rude irruption
Hitting thy aged ear should pierce too deep.

Man. Suspense in news is torture, speak them out.

Meff. Then take the worst in brief, *Samson* is dead.

Man. The worst indeed, O all my hope's defeated
To free him hence! but death who sets all free
Hath paid his ransom now and full discharge.
What windy joy this day had I conceiv'd

H

Hopefull

Hopefull of his Delivery, which now proves
Abortive as the first-born bloom of spring.
Nipt with the lagging rere of winters frost.
Yet e'er I give the reins to grief, say first,
How dy'd he? death to life is crown or shame.
All by him fell thou say'st, by whom fell he,
What glorious hand gave *Samson* his deaths wound?

Meff. Unwounded of his enemies he fell.

Man. Wearied with slaughter then or how? explain.

Meff. By his own hands.

Man. Self-violence? what cause
Brought him so soon at variance with himself
Among his Foes? *Meff.* Inevitable cause
At once both to destroy and be destroy'd;
The Edifice where all were met to see him
Upon their heads and on his own he pull'd.

Man. O lastly over-strong against thy self!
A dreadfull way thou took'st to thy revenge.
More than enough we know; but while things yet
Are in confusion, give us if thou canst,
Eye-witness of what first or last was done,
Relation more particular and distinct.

Meff. Occasions drew me early to this City,
And as the gates I entr'd with Sun-rise,
The morning Trumpets Festival proclaim'd
Through each high street: little I had dispatch'd,
When all abroad was rumour'd that this day
Samson should be brought forth to shew the people

Proof

Proof of his mighty strength in feats and games;
I sorrow'd at his captive state, but minded
Not to be absent at that spectacle.
The building was a specious Theatre
Half-round on two main Pillars vaulted high,
With seats where all the Lords and each degree
Of sort, might sit in order to behold,
The other side was op'n, where the throng
On banks and scaffolds under Skie might stand;
I among those aloof obscurely stood.
The Feast and noon grew high, and Sacrifice
Had fill'd their hearts with mirth, high chear, and wine
When to their sports they turn'd. Immediately
Was *Samson* as a publick servant brought,
In their state Livery clad; before him Pipes
And Timbrels, on each side went armed guards,
Both horse and foot before him and behind
Archers, and Slingers, Cataphracts and Spears.
At sight of him the people with a shout
Rifted the Air clamouring their god with praise,
Who had made their dreadfull enemy their thrall.
He patient but undaunted where they led him,
Came to the place, and what was set before him
Which without help of eye might be assay'd,
To heave, pull, draw, or break, he still perform'd
All with incredible, stupendious force,
None daring to appear Antagonist.
At length for intermission sake they led him
Between the pillars; he his guide requested
(For so from such as nearer stood we heard)
As over-tir'd to let him lean a while
With both his armes on those two massie Pillars
That to the arched roof gave main support.
He unsuspecting led him; which when *Samson*

H 2

Felt

Felt in his armes, with head a while enclin'd,
 And eyes fast fixt he stood, as one who pray'd,
 Or some great matter in his mind revolv'd.
 At last with head erect thus cry'd aloud,
 Hitherto, Lords, what your commands impos'd
 I have perform'd, as reason was, obeying,
 Nor without wonder or delight beheld.
 Now of my own accord such other tryal
 I mean to shew you of my strength, yet greater;
 As with amaze shall strike all who behold.
 This utter'd, straining all his nerves he bow'd,
 As with the force of winds and waters pent,
 When Mountains tremble, those two massie Pillars
 With horrible convulsion to and fro,
 He tugg'd, he took, till down they came and drew
 The whole roof after them, with burst of thunder
 Upon the heads of all who sat beneath,
 Lords, Ladies, Captains, Councillors, or Priests,
 Their choice Nobility and flower, not onely
 Of this but each *Philistian* City round
 Met from all parts to solemnize this Feast.
Samson with these immixt, inevitably
 Pull'd down the same destruction on himself;
 The vulgar onely scap'd who stood without.

Chor. O dearly-bought revenge, yet glorious!
 Living or dying thou hast fulfill'd
 The work for which thou wast foretold
 To *Israel*, and now ly'st victorious
 Among thy slain self-kill'd
 Not willingly, but tangl'd in the fold,
 Of dire necessity, whose law in death conjoin'd
 Thee with thy slaughter'd foes in number more
 Than all thy life had slain before.

Semichor.

Semichor. While their hearts were jocond & sublime,
 Drunk with Idolatry, drunk with Wine,
 And fat regorg'd of Bulls and Goats,
 Chaunting their Idol, and preferring
 Before our living Dread who dwells
 In *Silo* his bright Sanctuary:
 Among them he a spirit of phrenzie sent,
 Who hurt their minds,
 And urg'd them on with mad desire
 To call in haste for their destroyer;
 They onely set on sport and play
 Unweetingly importun'd
 Their own destruction to come speedy upon them.
 So fond are mortal men
 Fall'n into wrath divine,
 As their own ruine on themselves to invite,
 Insensate left, or to sense reprobate,
 And with blindness internal struck.

Semichor. But he though blind of sight,
 Despis'd and thought extinguish'd quite,
 With inward eyes illuminated
 His ferie virtue rouz'd
 From under ashes into sudden flame,
 And as an ev'ning Dragon came,
 Assailant on the perched roosts,
 And nests in order rang'd
 Of tame villatick Fowl; but as an Eagle
 His cloudless thunder bolted on their heads.
 So virtue giv'n for lost,
 Deprest, and overthrown, as seem'd,
 Like that self-begott'n Bird
 In the *Arabian* woods embost,

That

That no second knows nor third,
And lay e'er while a Holocaust,
From out her ashie womb now teem'd,
Revives, refflourishes, then vigorous most
When most unactive deem'd,
And though her body die, her fame survives,
A secular Bird ages of lives.

Man. Come, come, no time for lamentation now,
Nor much more cause, *Samson* hath quit himself
Like *Samson*, and heroickly hath finish'd
A life Heroick, on his Enemies
Fully reveng'd, hath left them years of mourning,
And lamentation to the Sons of *Chaptor*
Through all *Philistian* bounds. To *Israel*
Honour hath left, and freedom, let but them
Find courage to lay hold on this occasion,
To himself and Father's house eternal fame;
And which is best and happiest yet, all this
With God not parted from him, as was fear'd,
But favouring and assisting to the end.
Nothing is here for tears, nothing to wail
Or knock the breast, no weakness, no contempt,
Dispraise, or blame, nothing but well and fair,
And what may quiet us in a death so noble.
Let us go find the body where it lies
Sok'd in his enemies blood, and from the stream
With lavers pure and cleansing herbs wash off
The clodded gore. I with what speed the while
(*Gaza* is not in plight to say us nay)
Will send for all my kindred, all my friends
To fetch him hence and solemnly attend
With silent obsequie and funeral train
Home to his Father's house: there will I build him
A Monument.

A Monument, and plant it round with shade
Of Laurel ever green, and branching Palm,
With all his Trophies hung, and Acts enroll'd
In copious Legend, or sweet Lyrick Song.
Thither shall all the valiant youth resort,
And from his memory inflame their breasts
To matchless valour, and adventures high:
The Virgins also shall on feastfull days
Visit his Tomb with flowers, onely bewailing
His lot unfortunate in nuptial choice,
From whence captivity and loss of eyes.

Chor. All is best, though we oft doubt,
What th' unsearchable dispose
Of highest wisdom brings about,
And ever best found in the close.
Oft he seems to hide his face,
But unexpectedly returns
And to his faithfull Champion hath in place
Bore witness gloriously; whence *Gaza* mourns
And all that band them to resist
His uncontrollable intent,
His servant he with new acquit
Of true experience from this great event
With peace and consolation hath dismiss'd,
And calm of mind all passion spent.

T H E E N D.